

Document 5
Proposals for Projected Ending Balance
FY 2012 State Water Plan Fund

Kansas Department of Agriculture
Division of Water Resources
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1. Dam Rehabilitation: \$100,000 or more

Some high-hazard and significant-hazard dams in Kansas are deficient in that they have serious physical deterioration or do not meet minimum design standards to adequately protect human life and property. The cost for rehabilitating dams can be very expensive, and some owners do not have the financial means to cover the costs. Watershed districts and other special districts are eligible for a cost share program administered by the State Conservation Commission. However, there is no such program for other publically-owned dams or private dams that provide public benefits. The Kansas Water Authority has proposed the use of ELARF (gaming) revenue for dam rehabilitation; however, unless or until this materializes we propose the use of state water plan ending balance funds to cost-share with owners on rehabilitation of dams for which the chief engineer has issued an unsafe dam order, subject to eligibility requirements and conditions to ensure long-term public safety benefits.

2. Online Water Use Reporting: \$50,000 to \$100,000

DWR currently mails over 14,000 water use report forms each year for approximately 35,000 active water rights (multiple water rights on some reports). Upon receipt of completed water use forms, DWR staff date stamps, sorts, codes, and manually keys information from the water use reports into the Water Rights Information System database. Several years ago the agency worked with Kansas Geologic Survey to develop an online water use reporting system to automate the process. However, in FY 2009 the effort was shelved due to budget cuts. Remaining steps to complete and implement the project include beta testing, debugging and/or rewriting code as necessary to correct any problems or deficiencies, training agency staff to run the system, notifying and instructing water use correspondents, and assisting water use correspondents during the transition. The proposed funding is needed to cover contractual and other expenses for implementation. Over time, this process automation is anticipated to achieve significant cost savings.

3. Dam Safety Inspections: \$220,000 per year

In FY 2007, the Kansas Legislature provided funding for DWR to hire two professional engineers and a senior administrative assistant to conduct and document inspections of all high-hazard and significant-hazard dams. These are dams located above homes, businesses, schools, streets with high traffic volumes, or other locations where failure of the dam would likely result in deaths and substantial property damage. However, due to budget cuts in FY 2009 and FY 2010, DWR had to lay off the three dam safety inspection positions and discontinue the program, placing the financial burden back on owners to retain private engineers to perform dam safety inspections beginning in FY 2011 (inspections due in FY 2010 were postponed to give owners time to adjust). If the Legislature does not resume funding dam safety inspections through state general funds or other means, the agency may seek state water plan funding in FY 2012 to provide this important public safety service.